

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O 132358Z JUL 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2526
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 02884

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, SY, LE, IS, PINS, MARR
SUBJECT: LEBANON: SECRETARY GENERAL PLANS STOPOVER IN DAMASCUS

1. AMBASSADOR LEONARD AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY MAYNES, ACCOMPANIED BY COUNSELOR NIMETZ AND POLMIN, CALLED ON SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM LATE JULY 12 TO PROVIDE HIM WITH A REVIEW OF OUR RECENT INTENSIVE EFFORTS TO BUILD A DEGREE OF STABILITY IN THE LEBANESE AREA. UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL GUYER AND ASSISTANT TO SECRETARY GENERAL ROHAN WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. WALDHEIM EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. HE SAID HIS PERCEPTION OF THE DANGER IN THE CURRENT SITUATION IS VERY PARALLEL TO THAT OF THE U.S. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT A POSSIBLE VISIT TO THE AREA, WALDHEIM SAID HE PLANNED TO MAKE AN OVERNIGHT STOP IN DAMASCUS ENROUTE TO THE OAU SUMMIT MEETING IN KHARTOUM NEXT WEEK. HE SAID HE WOULD DEPART NEW YORK SUNDAY, JULY 16, PROBABLY ARRIVING IN DAMASCUS JULY 17, AND GOING ON TO KHARTOUM JULY 18. HE EXPLAINED
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THAT HE WAS NOT AT THIS TIME PLANNING VISITS TO BEIRUT AND JERUSALEM BECAUSE OF LACK OF TIME AND BECAUSE HE HAD VISITED BOTH ON HIS PREVIOUS TRIP. HE ALSO OBSERVED THAT THE STATEMENT BY SARKIS ON HIS POSSIBLE RESIGNATION MADE A VISIT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL DIFFICULT.

3. WALDHEIM READILY ACCEPTED LEONARD'S SUGGESTION THAT,

IN THE ABSENCE OF A VISIT TO BEIRUT, WALDHEIM MIGHT AT
LEAST TALK WITH SARKIS ON THE PHONE WHILE HE IS IN
DAMASCUS. WALDHEIM ALSO SUGGESTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER
BOUTROS MIGHT MEET HIM IN DAMASCUS DURING HIS STOPOVER.
LEONARD SAID HE URGED THESE CONTACTS WITH THE GOVERNMENT
OF LEBANON, BECAUSE HE FEELS THE LEBANESE LEADERS NEED
BUOYING UP. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL LET
THE SYRIANS KNOW THAT THE U.S. CANNOT SIT STILL AND
WATCH THE KILLING IN BEIRUT IF THE FIGHTING RESUMES. AS
WE INDICATED BY OUR ACTION LAST WEEK, A CALL FOR A
SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING IS ONE OPTION WE STILL RETAIN,
EVEN THOUGH WE ARE FULLY AWARE THAT ONE RESULT OF EXPOSURE
IN THE COUNCIL WOULD BE EMBARRASSMENT FOR BOTH THE
SYRIANS AND THE ISRAELIS. LEONARD

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